

The Leopard Hasn't Changed Its Spots

By Claudia Jones

The recent appointment of Mrs. Edith Sampson, Chicago Negro woman attorney, as the first American Negro to serve as alternate delegate to the United Nations is undoubtedly an unprecedented step. Since her appointment also represents the highest post ever held by a Negro woman in the United States, it is fitting to inquire, whether, as is being widely interpreted, this is a step "offering liberation" to America's fifteen million Negroes.

In a Chicago interview, Mrs. Sampson rushed into print expressing joy at being named, stating that she was "thrilled" at reports of her appointment. What occasioned Mrs. Sampson's "thrill" at being named to this high international post? Was she "thrilled" at the opportunity to raise the innumerable pitfalls faced by the thrice-oppressed Negro working women, whose sons, victims of juncrow on Tokyo's beaches, are today expendable in Wall Street's Korean war against the heroic colored peoples of the Far East? Was she "thrilled" perhaps, at the opportunity through the UN to raise the case of Mrs. Rosa Lee Ingram, mother of 14 children, falsely imprisoned for over three years in a foul Georgia jail for defending her dignity against the assault to her person by a KKK landlord?

It appears that Mrs. Sampson's source of pleasure stemmed from quite another source. Hastening to guarantee herself, and aligning herself with the tenor of press reports that appointment of a Negro would "counteract Soviet propaganda" regarding racial discrimination in the U.S., she declared:

"I would be glad to refute such propaganda. There are pitfalls for our race, in this country, of course, but they are not as the Kremlin would like to picture them." (New York Times, Aug. 20.)

As the record will later show, the true "pitfalls for our race" which she claims as her concern, have nowhere been really pictured by Edith Sampson. Perhaps this explains why she rushed with such haste to jump on the now lucrative anti-Soviet bandwagon: It is in this context the question as to the real reason for her appointment as to whether her appointment is a "step towards integration of Ne-

groes in American life" undoubtedly can be answered.

In the candid assertion of Wall Street's bipartisan press, then, slavishly mouthed by bought sections of the Negro press, a Negro woman is appointed to the United Nations as alternate delegate—not by virtue of constitutional right and ability, but "to counteract Russian propaganda." Who else but a racist-minded imperialist crew could brazenly couch as the basis for a Negro appointee to a world body, such a justification—on racial grounds, "to counteract Russian propaganda?"

IT IS THE ESSENCE of imperialist contempt to assume that Negroes can be fooled so easily. That a Negro may lend herself to this assumption does not make it any less contemptuous. One is known by the company he keeps. That Mrs. Sampson's "colleagues" will be John Foster Dulles and John Sparkman, white supremacist polltax Alabama Senator, on the General Assembly of the UN, only further exposes the questionable motives of her "integration."

But there is still another side to Mrs. Sampson's appointment. It is acknowledgment that American propaganda of "equality," "opportunity" and "free enterprise" is suffering from serious setbacks despite the "Niagara" of Voice of America broadcasts—to Africa, India, China—and Korea too, where wanton murderous bombings of Korean women and children take place by B-29's. For here the peoples have heard of Rose Lee Ingram, the Martinsville 7, Willie McGee and the Trenton Six. They heard of the killing of FEPC the day after the unjust Korean war was launched on Truman's unilateral order which is bringing death to millions of colonial colored peoples.

They laugh in their cups at the State Department's assertion, in denial of a passport to Paul Robeson, that racial discrimination is a "family affair." The very assertion, therefore, that Mrs. Sampson's appointment is to "counteract Russian propaganda" is unwitting admission that racial discrimination in the U. S. never was, is not and cannot be a "family affair!"

Millions of darker peoples know that the touchstone of

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America's sincerity in world affairs is the status of its Negro citizens. They will know, as will millions of Negro men and women, that this Truman-appointment in no wise "offers liberation" to Negro citizens. They will know that the leopard has not changed its spots.

NO APPOINTMENT, even of a Negro woman, can erase from the consciousness of darker peoples, including millions of Negro working women the ever present status of lynching, poll-taxes, segregation and third class citizenship. Do not myriads of Negro women still weep for their lynched sons, and those cut down in the prime of their manhood by trigger happy cops? And what of the Negro war widows whose sons and husbands are expendable in Korea, where correspondents "hail their exploits" but cannot censor news of the foul insult by a Georgia Senator to a Negro leader on the floor of Congress?

What of the millions of our sisters in the fields and on the job, whose lot is still the most menial of tasks? All these are molding a militant Negro womanhood, cut in the cloth of Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth. They do not run or crawl but stand and fight like Rosa Lee Ingram, Bessie Mitchell, Amy Mallard and Rosalee McGee, who hurl lie for lie into the teeth of reaction!

It is the people's struggle for Negro rights which compels partial concessions to the indignant—yet unmet—demands for full equality for America's 15 million second class citizens. Hence the appointment of a Negro woman to stay this rising cry of militant Negro womanhood who are everywhere demanding peace and equality now for their families; hence the effort to win Negro support for anti-Soviet pro-imperialist intervention and an atomic world war of conquest. To do this it is necessary to make partial concessions. But these partial concessions are marked by complete indifference to the real fate of the masses of Negro people, who suffer unemployment, intensified national oppression, despite demagogic assertions of "equality," "integration," which issue forth as a regular crop yearly by the American two-party system. There is no other framework in which American imperialism can, of its own volition, advance Negroes to higher posts today.

Negro reformists seek to obscure this truth by talk of "integration," the advance of Negroes to higher public posts, etc., as they bargain under the table of American intervention against the embattled colonial peoples of the earth, for better positions, from which vantage point they seek to play their lucrative role of craven apologists for American imperialism.

American imperialism must, nevertheless, meet the ever-widening criticisms, resentments and counter-attacks of colored peoples all over the earth who, like a tidal wave, are indicating that they are done with imperialist subjugation—and their own reformists! And, due to the extreme pro-racist vulnerability of American imperialism, which is in the woof and warp of their every declaration and deed, this same imperialism must meet the truthfully, well-aimed criticism, in relation to the champion, looked to by ever increasing oppressed millions in Asia and Africa—the Socialist Soviet Union.

Not least of all, of the criticisms they must meet, is the unflagging, championship in struggle on behalf of the full

economic, political and social equality of the Negro people, of Negro-white unity, based on the firm rock of the Negro-labor alliance, fought for over 30 years, by the vanguard Party of the American working class—the Party of Foster, Dennis, Hall, Winston and Davis—the American Communist Party.

WHAT AN EXPOSURE IS THIS imperialist admission that they must appoint Negroes to higher posts to counter this struggle! To put it in other words, it is an exposure of the oft-used lying imperialist charge that we Communists "use the Negro question" to advance our own aims. There can be no question that a clear distinction exists between forces who fight to advance the Negro people to full citizenship, by recognizing the special nature of their national oppression, in jimcrow America, and those who hide Negro national oppression by obscuring the fight for special recognition of the Wall Street roots of their oppression under the guise of "cosmopolitanism," "integrationism," etc.

To be sure, this is not the first appointment made relative to Negroes by American imperialism. Many bipartisan "token" appointments form a growing pattern.

Inherent here, of course, is crafty imperialist discernment of the powerful and growing militancy of the Negro people—of Negro working women—a key part of the Negro liberation movement—the most oppressed in the strata of American capitalist society, and hence one of the most potentially powerful sectors for the growing anti-fascist, anti-imperialist coalition.

But these appointments, in contrast to the Roosevelt New Deal, of necessity must be doubly guaranteed. After all, the "safety" of certain appointees is an old stock in trade of every ruling class. All the more so, of course, by American imperialism, long practiced at this art, since the days of Negro chattel enslavement. All the more necessary to be employed when a decadent system cannot rule as of old, but must utilize as puppets the reformists among the very oppressed peoples they are contemptuous of, to do their dirty work. And, if it is done "graciously"—well, the mask fits a little less wobbly.

If not alone by her own admission, Mrs. Sampson's record speaks for itself in this regard. For she is a "safe" choice, as safe as the specially privileged predecessors who worked in the homes of the plantation owners more than 300 years ago. Not safe enough, to be sure, to be a full fledged UN delegate. Even this distinction, slight though it appears, corresponds to the exact status of Negro citizens in the United States, which actually is a second class status.

The final installment of this article will appear tomorrow.

ACLU to Probe Radio Witchhunts

The American Civil Liberties Union announced yesterday the appointment of Merle Miller to head its investigation of the problem of witchhunts in the radio and television industry. Miller is a member of the ACLU Board of Directors. The ACLU had been interested in the general problem for some time and announced an intensification of its study at the end of August, when actress Jean Muir was dropped from a NBC television program by her sponsor, General Foods Corporation, after protests had been received about her appearance, because of the inclusion of her name in the private publication, Red Channels.